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EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 4, 2013

Wayne Brock, Chief Scout Executive
Wayne Perry, President
Boy Scouts of America
P.O. Box 152079
Irving, Texas 75015-2079

Dear Mr. Brock and Mr. Perry:

I am pleased to hear that the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) is reconsidering its nationwide ban on openly gay members, and I am writing to urge the organization to end this policy of discrimination.

Let me first say how much I appreciate what BSA has done for our youth and communities. Personally, I have had the opportunity to congratulate dozens of Eagle Scouts in my Congressional District who have performed exemplary acts of service and leadership to earn that rank. In the process, they learn much about themselves and the value of helping others in the community.

But it's my belief that BSA's discriminatory policies on homosexuality undermine these valuable parts of its mission. While Scouting teaches our youth to respect, help, and serve all, these policies demonstrate intolerance, insensitivity, and fear.

Along with many others across the country, I was incredibly disappointed by BSA's decision last summer to uphold its longtime ban. That decision has put the organization at sharp odds with the growing acceptance of gays and lesbians across today's society. Openly gay men and women now run corporations, are members of Congress, have clergy positions in their churches, and hold many other positions of leadership. Even the military has ended its ban on openly gay service members, and, despite all the fears, has suffered absolutely no ill effects from doing so.

It's time for the Boy Scouts of America to follow suit. I am glad that the organization is again reconsidering this policy. I urge you to lift the national ban and to require all levels of the organization to follow it. It is the right thing to do for the future of Scouting, the communities you serve, and the youth who are watching. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress